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III.

AN ADVERTISEMENT FOR A NEW RELIGION.

AMONG our advanced thinkers two points are now happily settled beyond the need of further inquiry and the propriety of reconsideration. One is, that all the old religions, including Christianity, in one sense the best and in another the worst of them, are waxing old, and must soon die. Each of the creeds has had "its little day," as our Broad Church poet sings—little compared with the many and prolonged geological ages, or even with the myriads of years which have elapsed since the man-apes began to stand upright, and try to look up to heaven; but the ages of the past are merging into the future, as the dawn brightens into the day. First, fetichism had its day, probably a very long, prehistoric one, when men, just risen above monkeys, struggled to speak, and had an awe of earth-powers; then came the worship of the higher works of Nature—sun, moon, stars, and animals; then polytheism, which divided the complex one into many to give a power to each agent of Nature; next, or at the same time, hero-worship, with idolatry and carved images; then a pantheism on the rise of philosophy, and among the Hebrews the exaltation through national pride of a tribal god into a One God, supposed to rule over all the world; and finally an incarnate God, at once divine and human in Christianity. We now know that all these have been developed out of the rude ideas and wants of the human heart, and had their shape given them by the environment. Monotheism, too, has had varied forms, retaining so much of polytheism in its Virgin and angels and saints in the Romish Church, and military hero-worship in the faith which shouts every morning, "Allah! Allah! there is one God, and Mohammed is his prophet!" We can now thoroughly understand and explain all this on the grand new scientific principles of "natural selection" and "the struggle for existence." Lecky

has shown very skillfully, in his work on "Rationalism," that antiquated systems pass away—like old men—not because they have been attacked by argument, but simply because, like the races which have perished slowly in the geological ages, they are not fitted to the new circumstances, and cannot survive among the new ideas which have sprung up by spontaneous generation. In the struggle for existence, certain beliefs are cast off, and only those continue which can stand the new conditions. The Reformers undermined the faith of the Catholic Church, and Mr. Leslie Stephen has shown how the deistical writers of last century successfully undermined the strangely-mixed and incongruous faiths of the Hebrew and Christian Scriptures. Rationalism and Unitarianism have exposed so much of the weakness of the infallible Bible that shrewd men now see that all must go. The great thinkers of the last century and a half have been against the Bible:—Hume and Gibbon, and we may add Froude, among historians, fitted to examine evidence; Voltaire, Rousseau, Goethe, Saint-Beuve, and Matthew Arnold, among men of literary genius; while philosophers like Kant, Fichte, and Hegel, have looked coldly on inspiration; and Schopenhauer and Von Hartmann have shown how wretched a world this is; and our great *savants*, Laplace, Humboldt, Darwin, Huxley, and Tyndall, have set the Bible aside as not worthy of being looked at. Christianity, both in the form of Popery and Protestantism, has still roots fixed in the soil; but they are like those of the old oaks which I have seen in England, condemned as useless for ship-lumber in the days of Cromwell, with the top-branches dying and ready to be blown away by the first tempest moving on irresistibly to fill up the vacuum created by the burning up of old faiths.

A new era has dawned, more important than the ternary, when mammals appeared; or the quaternary, when man appeared. Great typical men have come forth, undermining not only revealed but natural religion,—it is now acknowledged that, when the Bible is gone, no rational religion can remain. Hume showed at one and the same time that there is no valid proof for the existence of God, as worlds may have come into being without a cause; and that a miracle cannot be proved, men being so liable to delusion in such matters. Kant confuted all the old and venerable arguments for the Divine existence, and was not very

successful in building up a new one by means of the practical reason; for, if the speculative reason may deceive in holding that every effect has a cause, why may not the practical reason also be delusive? Indeed, the practical reason, or conscience, is now shown by Bain and Darwin to be simply the product of circumstances and heredity. Comte has demonstrated that we cannot discover either first or final causes—the two dark caves from which all religions have issued, like wild beasts, and into which they retreat when pursued. Mr. J. S. Mill has admitted that, on the principle (which, however, has no evidence in its favor) of causation being universal, there may be some presumption in favor of the existence of a God; but then he proves that this God cannot be an omnipotent God, otherwise he would prevent the evil. Darwin has plucked from man's brow his claim that he was specially created by God and in God's image, and has demonstrated his derivation from the ascidian through the catarrhine monkey. Huxley, the great physiologist, has satisfied naturalists that man does not differ so much from the lower animals as they do from one another, or as one portion of mankind differs from another, and has found a physical basis of mind, in which latter point he has been followed by Lewes. Last of all, there has risen up in these times the highest development of all in one who combines in himself Locke, with his experience, and Kant, with his forms, and has explained all physical Nature by the persistence of force, and all life and mind by the interaction of internal and external relations. I need not say that I refer to Herbert Spencer.

But there is a second truth admitted with nearly equal unanimity—indeed, by all but a few conceited youths who have lately been talking very loudly. It is that man has religious instincts—is, in short, a religious animal, and must have some sort of worship. Hume used to go at times to church in Scotland, and labored to make the moderate ministers there, corresponding to the Unitarian ministers here, adopt a rational religion. Kant, the intellectual Samson, who brought down the temple upon others, but also on himself, left us no God speculatively, but then he called in the practical reason, with its corollaries, a conscience, a day of judgment, an immortality, and a God, and thus restored what he had taken away. We have all seen "*Deo erexit Voltaire*" on

the temple at Ferney, where nobody worships, plainly because the age is beyond deism, but has not yet reached the true religion. Rousseau is full of pious sentiment, and has pronounced the most beautiful eulogium ever uttered on Jesus of Nazareth, declaring that, while Socrates died as a man, Jesus died as a god. Comte had no god, but he had a Grand *Être* in collective humanity, and he had a priesthood and nine sacraments, and enjoined public honors to be paid to his deity, allowing no liberty of conscience or of education to any one. Huxley, as a member of the School Board in London, insists that the Bible be introduced into every school, as knowing that science does not tend to make men moral, and that the Bible, though full of error, is the only book fitted to form the character of the young. Tyndall is exceedingly indignant at those who would charge him with doing away with religion. "No atheistic reasoning," he says, "can, I hold, dislodge religion from the heart of man. Logic cannot deprive us of life, and religion is life to the religious. As an experience of consciousness, it is perfectly beyond the assaults of logic." Herbert Spencer has allotted a very spacious region to God and to religion, the Unknown and Unknowable, and commends the Athenians for erecting an altar to the unknown God.

It is a very interesting circumstance that there are little groups of advanced, truth-loving men and women, who meet for conference on the Sundays in London, and in New York, Chicago, and other enlightened cities. I have at times attended their meetings. At one of them, which I remember particularly, we had a very burning address from a man of genius, who had started as a Scotch Calvinist, and run through all modern forms of faith, and now believes in the ETERNITIES, of whom, or of which, he discoursed in a glow surpassing that of the setting sun. He had evidently taken his faith and his language from Thomas Carlyle, who is one of the prophets of our own, and who believes in Force as a god, and gives him or it sufficient omnipotence, and ever flares up into the "immensities," and the "realities," and the "moralities," as does also our own Emerson. M. Renan, after showing that Jesus was tempted by the necessity of upholding his mission into imposture at the grave of Lazarus, tells us in the very strongest language that he has not cast

aside religion, but believes in an "eternal religion." In short, the great men who have risen like mountains in our world have all been profoundly religious; thus, to name some of them in their historical order: Socrates, Plato, Jesus of Nazareth, Bacon, Descartes, Newton, Spinoza, Leibnitz; and, in this last age, Herschel, Faraday, Mayer, and Henry.

Both these truths have been established by a large induction, going as far back as history and archæology can carry us. In reaching them there have, in the struggles for existence, been fearful conflicts between Science and Religion, of which Dr. Draper and President White have been the historians, altogether on our side. There have even been internal feuds in each of the hostile camps, both on the religious and the irreligious (so charged) sides. This we might expect, for the whole of cosmical action is carried on by the repulsions as well as attractions of molecules, and human history has to speak as much of war as of peace. Religions have had their dissensions, and so have positivists. Prof. Huxley has once and again used very irreverent language in speaking of our great system-builder, M. Comte. Replying to the Archbishop of York, he says:

"So far as I am concerned, the most reverend prelate might dialectically hew M. Comte in pieces, as a modern Agag, and I should not attempt to stay his hand. In so far as my study of what specially characterizes the Positive Philosophy has led me, I find therein little or nothing of any scientific value, and a great deal which is as thoroughly antagonistic to the very essence of science as anything in ultramontane Catholicism. In fact, M. Comte's philosophy in practice might be compendiously described as Catholicism *minus* Christianity."

But a far more painful attack has been made within the last few months on one of our very greatest men, who has for years past been acknowledged to be the greatest of our logicians—in fact, the special philosopher of his age. Prof. Jevons is so presumptuous as to speak thus of Mr. J. S. Mill:

"For about twenty years past I have been a more or less constant student of his books; during the last fourteen years I have been compelled, by the traditional requirements of the University of London, to make these works at least partially my text-books in

lecturing. Some ten years of study passed before I began to detect their fundamental unsoundness. . . . I will no longer consent to live silently under the incubus of bad logic and bad philosophy which Mill's works have laid upon us. . . . If to all his other qualities had been happily added logical accurateness, his writings would indeed have been a source of light for generations to come. But in one way or other Mill's intellect was wrecked. The cause of injury may have been the ruthless training which his father imposed upon him in tender years; it may have been Mill's own life-long attempt to reconcile a false empirical philosophy with conflicting truth. But, however it arose, Mill's mind was essentially illogical. . . . I undertake to show that there is hardly one of his more important and peculiar doctrines which he has not himself amply refuted."

I might quote pages of similar opprobrious language. There may be some truth in it as applied to Mill's formal logic, in which he has never been regarded as an adept. But he makes an equally strong attack on his inductive logic, which has commonly been regarded as perfect. He describes "Mill's mind as essentially illogical;" he speaks of "the perversity of his intellect;" declares that "the philosophy of the Mills, both father and son, is a false one;" and says of a certain paragraph that "it is likely to produce intellectual vertigo in the steadiest thinker." He disparages Mill's famous canons of induction, and affirms that he confounds both causation and induction. But all this dogmatism will not prevent Mr. Mill from surviving. Men will soon discover that Jevons's attempt to make logic mathematical is an entire failure. It is not a proper interpretation of the judgment "man dies," to put it in the form "man = some dying creatures." It is clear to me that, in the struggle for existence, Mills will long outlive Jevons.

As man must have a religion, and the old religions are sick, dying, or dead, so we must have a new-born religion. We cannot hasten the orderly but slow processes of Nature. A premature birth must produce a weakly child. Emerson says truly, in the last number of this REVIEW, "It does not yet appear what forms the religious feeling will take." So we are not able to describe fully what the new religion already in the womb is to be. But we can confidently affirm that it must obey certain conditions, and can specify some of the negative ones.

1. It cannot have a God living and personal. This would be pure, or rather very impure, anthropomorphism. In the philosophy of Plato, and in the Old and New Testaments, and the popular apprehension, man is supposed to be formed after the image of God ; but the truth is, man has formed his god after his own image, quite as much so as when the old idolaters cut down a tree and made a man-god figure out of it. The old Greek philosopher Xenophanes satirically remarked that the Thracians gave blue eyes and the Ethiopians snub noses to their gods ; so the Christians make their god hate what they hate, and denounce as sin and send all to hell who do not believe as they do. There can be no objections with Spencer to call the Unknown by the name of God, but then he must not be regarded as having properties that can be named, or even thought of,—the lofty Neoplatonists of Alexandria were right in making their god so high and pure that no predication could be made regarding him.

2. It cannot insist on a personal immortality to the soul. This would be bringing an Egyptian mummy of the days of the Pharaohs into a modern drawing-room. True, every object known is not only immortal, but eternal, as the doctrine of the conservation of force shows ; and has existed in all past time, and shall exist forever—if there be a forever. But the individual soul is the product of the brain, and, when the brain is decomposed, the soul must dissolve with it into its material elements ; and is really so insignificant that it is not transmuted into any other force. I am not aware that the soul of Shakespeare, or of Newton, when they died, added any weighable powers to the dust to which they returned.

3. There must be no terrors drawn from a day of judgment. These may frighten children, and men and women weak as children, but highly-developed men are beyond them, and look down with pity, not unmixed with contempt, on those who are swayed by them. True, there is a judgment set up in our world—one which pronounces terrible sentences that cannot be reversed. It is the struggle for existence, in which those not suited to the environment—the weak, the deaf, the blind, the decrepit, the negroes, the Indians—as being useless, must perish ; and the strong, the healthy, the bold, especially evolutionists, will survive and advance the civilization of the world.

4. There can be no ghostly sanctions or motives derived from a supernatural power, or a world to come. The thinking portion of mankind have never been much swayed by considerations drawn from these regions above or below our ken. Any attempt to enforce them in this advanced age will be resisted by every man of independence.

5. Everything beyond what can be seen must be represented as unknown and unknowable. The Hebrews were right in saying that clouds and darkness cover the face of God's throne, and furnish a mystery fitted to awe us; and in that region, as in the heathen groves, religion may be allowed to dwell.

It is vastly more difficult, beforehand, to tell positively what the new religion is to be. Still the prophets of our own, and the priests who have charge of it, have given us certain characteristics. Mr. Mill has given us a description of the worship set up by Comte, though he is not prepared to adopt it: "Private adoration is to be addressed to collective Humanity in the persons of worthy individual representatives, who may be either living or dead, but must in all cases be women; for women, being the *sexe aimant*, represent the best attribute of humanity that ought to regulate all human life, nor can humanity possibly be represented in any form but of a woman. The objects of private adoration are the mother, the life, the daughter, representing severally the past, the present, and the future, and calling into active exercise the three social sentiments—veneration, attachment, and kindness. We are to regard them, whether dead or alive, as our guardian angels, *les vraies anges gardiens*. If the last have never existed, or if in the particular case any of the three types is too faulty for the office assigned it, their place may be supplied by some other type of womanly excellence, even by one merely historical." All who have benefited the race are to be the *Dii Minores* of this theology: and days might be set apart to Democritus and his atoms which made the world; and to Lucretius who expelled all superstitious fears; and Hobbes who derived all our ideas from sensation; not omitting Comte himself, who rid us of first and final cause. I do fear, however, that this religion will not survive in the struggle for existence. Some of Comte's followers speak of it as an evidence of his lunacy.

But there must, I suppose, be a worship of some kind, were it only to accommodate the religion to human nature, which wishes to have an outlet to, and expression of, its feelings. But this worship, as Huxley has profoundly remarked, must be "chiefly of the silent sort." Worship has, in fact, never had much influence on the life of the worshiper. Borrow tells of the gypsy mother who said to her child, "You may go and steal, now that you have said your prayers." Religious emotion is an ebullition which wastes the energy without doing much good. But this worship of the "silent sort" may have a quiet influence without anybody seeing it.

With Humanity as its god, the religion must have an immortality, after which all are striving. Mr. Harrison, the most spirit-stirring of our later prophets, has been lately developed to tell us what it is to be. It is not to be a personal immortality, but it is to be a continued life in a man's works. Thus Homer lives in the "Iliad." In like manner the orator lives in the words he has uttered; and the actor in the parts he has played; and the singer in the tunes he has sung; and the trumpeter in the vibrations he has started; and the ploughman in the earth he has turned up; and the fisherman in the fish he has caught; and the butcher in the cattle he has killed: and Mr. Harrison in the posthumous influence-theory in the "Symposium" of the *Nineteenth Century*. This leads me to remark how happy a thing it is that we have two such organs as the *Contemporary Review* and the *Nineteenth Century* to give the prophets of the new religion an opportunity of being heard by respectable people. I find that the old lady, the *Quarterly*, always "so dastardly," complains of this. We are the more dependent on these two young organs since the old fires of the *Westminster Review* have burned themselves out, and left, like the volcanoes in the moon, only extinct craters.

Along with this belief there might be *fêtes* and festivals to rival the grand Catholic ceremonies. There would be some kind of Sabbath, but removed as far as possible from the Jewish and the Puritan; and to distinguish it it might be called Sunday, that is the sun's day, and we might have it like the French Revolutionists, once in ten days, instead of seven. On these occasions there would be lectures of the true American type, developing the theory

of development, evolving man from the brute, and showing that he may rise higher than he has ever yet done, though it is to be hoped never incapable of marriage. There might be hymns in honor of the great mother Nature, more worthy to be revered than the Virgin. With this there might be idols representing in symbol the great world-powers, such as Evolution, Persistence of Force, Heredity, Panzoism, and Physiological Units. Around the places of worship there might be groves like those dedicated in old time to Baal, the powerful fire-god. There would be assemblies of males and females with Bacchantic dances, where time would be delightfully spent, and the remembrance of which would be pleasant—vastly more so than the dreary hours spent in our preaching and praying conventicles. It will take time to create the fitting sentiment; but time is an essential condition of all natural evolution, and we can give the new religion ten thousand years to develop. In the struggle for existence all other religions would disappear and this alone would remain, till it gave birth to something still higher: not more heavenly—that is, ideal; but more earthly—that is, real and practical.

But at this point we are met by a difficulty which we must meet if we can. Man, it is acknowledged, has religious instincts which cannot be destroyed, even by the terrible struggles for existence. Whence come they? How is it that they cannot be eradicated? We evolutionists tell religious men (so called) that they may give up their fears, for religion has its seat so deep in the soul that it cannot be dislodged. But our prophets assure us that the human soul is developed from the higher animals, and these from the lower, and that there is a physical basis underneath the whole. How or when have these indestructible instincts come in? If they have come in from without, we have here a very marked phenomenon of which the evolution hypotheses can make nothing, and which, our pietists will say, implies a supernatural power. But, if we are to bring in one thing independent of development, why not more? Why not free-will, with Dr. Carpenter? Why not reason and intelligence, with the metaphysicians—until we overwhelm the whole glorious theory, evidently seen to be insufficient? And if, on the other hand, it be merely a natural product then it should disappear in the struggle for existence like other superstitions. Already there are signs of its beginning to

vanish in this nineteenth century of the present religion, and it must evidently all be gone before the nineteen-hundredth century. I fear that this contradiction must for the present be allowed to remain with the antinomies of Kant which have undermined all rational cosmology. But then Hegel has shown that all truth is contradictory, and there will cast up a synthesis to bridge over the gap in the analysis.

This new religion must come. The conditions are ready. Just as life appeared when inanimate matter was ready for it, and sensation came and consciousness came when the nerves were woven, and intelligence came when the brain was fashioned for it: and as Abraham went forth, not knowing whither he went, to publish the unity of God; and the son of the carpenter, at Nazareth, came to preach altruism under the name of love; and as Luther started up, like the cock-crowing that sounded in the ears of Peter, to bring the Church to see its errors—so the new faith has now to come forth, as the sun does at his appointed time. The world is ready to receive it; and as paganism gave way before Christianity, and the superstitions of Romanism fled before the reading of the Bible, and as rationalism has undermined evangelism, with its faith in blood, so a new priest must come with his rod to swallow all the rods of the magicians. It must all come by development. A virgin must once more bring forth a child; and, that this can be done, is illustrated by the new established doctrine of partheno-genesis. A variety will become settled into an unchangeable species, and will continue for ages, till it is superseded by something else, fitted to fight under the new conditions. “It doth not yet appear what we shall be.” There have been anticipations, however, and the leapings of the babe in the womb. But there must be a time longer of struggle for existence, till the strongest assert its might (which of course is right)—as we see among cattle in the field, the stronger cow fighting till she gets her preëminence allowed. Rational theology has done good by its assaults on Scripture; but then it professed to accept so much of Scripture as is rational—as if any of it were rational. Pure deism has always been felt to be chill as death, and now its supposed proofs, and indeed all rational theology, have been undermined by Hume, Kant, and Mill. Unitarianism is dead, and lying in state in order to burial, and of the dead I

desire to speak *nil nisi bonum*, especially as Unitarianism has no longer any power over young men, while it has helped to develop the present crisis. Mormonism, the only new religion which has sprung up in our rather barren age, is very coarse and gross, and is a warning to us of what an unscientific faith may become. I fear that the butterfly, when it appears, may have somewhat of the slime of the grub from which it has been developed. All this shows the greater need of a new faith founded on the latest natural knowledge.

There is an urgent need for a new belief to come, and that speedily. If not soon forthcoming, there is a risk that our young folks rush into forbidden ground. We are at present in a transition state, which is a critical state; we are in danger of being crushed in a collision between two trains, one of which has come upon the other before it has started. Our sons claim that in prosecuting their rights they are just as much entitled to advance beyond their fathers as their fathers did beyond their sires. Encouraged, as they allege, by our example, they are waxing bold, not to say petulant. They laugh at the worship instituted by Comte, and will not attend our select conferences. They have no great awe, and no dread whatever in regard to the unknown of Spencer; if it can never be known, why should they either revere or fear it? Nay, they maintain philosophically that the *phenomenon* does not logically imply a *noumenon*, and so they are carried back to the old Hume positions of there being nothing but appearances without a thing appearing, and affirm that the *noumenon* is a remainder of an old, superstitious philosophy, brought in awkwardly by Kant, and sustained by Hamilton, Mansel, and Spencer, to save them from blank skepticism, and now ready to disappear like mist before the light of the rising day. They seem to be satisfied with the appearances, and to care nothing about the unknown thing. Darwin was religious enough to call in three or four germs created by God; but Tyndall insists that anthropomorphism, which is to be so avoided, "is as firmly associated with the creation of a few forms as of a multitude;" and Huxley has started a pregnant hypothesis of a supposed early stage of the star-dust, when it produced germs which it cannot now do. Huxley and Tyndall still resolutely oppose spontaneous generation; but Bastian comes after, and gets bacteria out of liquid

substances in which all the germs have been killed by heat. Men like Sir John Herschel used to point to the human eye as giving evidence in its numerous adaptations of design; but the great physicist of our day, Helmholtz, tells us that, if an optician brought him so blundering an instrument as the eye, he would return it to him. Tyndall thinks he can explain even mental action by matter, and, in his sweeping lecture at Birmingham, would persuade us that we are responsible in much the same sense as the dog; that a criminal is absolutely necessitated to act as he does, and that we are necessitated to punish him to prevent the recurrence of the offense, as we strike a dog to prevent him from stealing again. There may be some truth in all this, but it is dangerous to publish it, as it may tempt young men to get as many of the sweets of the bee as they can, if only they can keep from being exposed to its sting.

Aristotle maintained that "Nature abhors a vacuum." He was wrong in applying this to the rise of water in a tube, as was shown by Torricelli, but he uttered a profound truth notwithstanding. The heart must have something to cling to beyond a negation, of which no one can say whether it has or has not a meaning. If what is unknown could be known, there might be some hope and activity; but it is unknowable, and so no human interest can attach to it. My daughter when in London went to a Wesleyan meeting one part of the day, and to a Sunday lecture, by Huxley, on another part; and, strange as it may sound, she preferred the sincere shouting, the amens and groans of the Methodists to the worship of "the silent sort," in which there seemed to be no heart or adoration—except in the organ. A bright young lady, after listening for six weeks to lectures on "Humanity," declared that she would rather worship the Virgin, who seemed to have a loving heart, and whom she identified with the statues of her in Italy. Some of my lady friends have told me that when crossed in love they would prefer a nunnery to an Owen phalanstery or a communist settlement at Oneida. But our greatest anxiety is about the young men, our sons, who, of course, have been brought up without a Bible, and without prayer, public or private, and whose reading is in physiology male and female, and in books we have not been able to keep from them; and who go to theatres, which we freely allow, as

they are schools of virtue, and see the sort of company in the gallery and the boxes, and go home with some of them simply to know more of them. We honestly tell them to be honest, and obliging, and chaste—always according to our ideas, which are surely liberal enough. But they puzzle us with questions which we have difficulty enough in answering satisfactorily to them in their present unsettled temper. If Comte loved adoringly another woman than his wife, “why,” they say, “may not we do the same? If Mr. Mill constantly associated in the tenderest manner with the druggist’s wife in the absence of her husband, why may not we have the like privilege?” They remind us that these illustrious men have been teaching us that there must be a new relation between the sexes established, and have left it very doubtful what it should be, and our youths think they may experiment on the subject. They remind us that Bradlaugh and his lady associate have been quoting the authority of Mr. Mill for their books condemned by the law-courts. We used to claim that we freethinkers of this age were moral compared with the infidels of the days of Tom Paine; I fear that we can no longer make this boast. It is alleged that in circles affected with our views directly, and more frequently indirectly, there is a loose code which allows those who yield to animal affection to justify themselves by an appeal to the now established doctrine of human parentage and descent—as, in the declining days of Rome, licentious men and women fortified themselves by the philosophy of Epicurus; and in the days of Louis XV. of France, by the science and example of the encyclopedists. The origin of man certainly does not furnish us with any arguments for monogamy or against temporary concubinage, our ancestors among the monkeys knowing no restrictions in these matters.

We do tell these youths to be moral. But they hint that morality, in the vulgar sense, has been undermined. We do not address to them any appeals drawn from the divine existence and a judgment-day; if we did so, they would laugh in our faces. Some of them are bold enough to tell us that, the sanction being gone, the law has gone with it, or, at least, is not to be considered as unbending, but may fit itself to conditions and environments. We do at times appeal to the conscience. But they remind us

that Prof. Bain has shown us that the conscience is simply the product of circumstances, founded on man's capacity for pleasure and pain; and the verified hypothesis of the evolutionist is, that it has been built up, in ten millions of years, from the primitive sensations of pleasure and pain felt by our ascidian forefathers. Having examined the title, and exposed its invalidity, they deny the right of this pretended despot to rule over us. Tyndall acknowledges that there is a religious instinct; but then he has also detected its origin among material atoms, and our youth doubt whether it can claim any authority.

We speak of the beauty of "altruism"—so much more significant a phrase than "love," which the Bible uses. Our youths answer, first self and then another, and ask, now that conscience is gone, what claim altruism has on them. "Let the another," each says, "look after himself, and I will look after myself, and oblige him when it suits me." But we urge upon them that it is for their interest to be good, and to do good. They answer that this is not so very obvious, and that they are so interested in the present pursuit, and so fascinated with an engaging affection, that they are willing to risk all earthly consequences, and they remind us that we need not fear any consequences in the world to come. All this can no doubt be answered, but not very satisfactorily, I fear, till we get the new "kingdom;" not, indeed, of "God," or "heaven," but of the "earth," in the highly-developed state which it has reached in this quaternary era of its history. But, when the new religion comes, it will collect around it a faith and attractive associations; and it will generate an artistic worship full of glow; and the hearts of our young men and women will be drawn toward it, and we shall have a joyous religion, with a free and generous morality, rejecting all asceticism, and attracting by its own charms.

Multitudes are looking and longing for the new religion, and the longing will bring it—just as was shown by the great naturalist, Lamarck, the longing of the animal brought it fins to swim in the sea, and wings to fly in the heavens. Some, I know, in this state of transition, are intensely and overwhelmingly anxious. They have lost their old faith, and the new one has not yet come. Strauss, in some of his earliest editions, used to say that it was not the truth, but the belief, that is powerful as a motive;

not the resurrection of Christ, but the belief in it. But, it being now known that there is no religious truth, and that there has been no resurrection, the faith has died for want of its needful nourishment. The heart is empty, and aching and crying for food—as the man dying of hunger does ; and for water—as the man dying of thirst does. There are, to my knowledge, terrible conflicts in the souls of some of our young men. There are distracting fears, also, in the bosoms of some of our young women who love their brothers and their lovers, and would like to follow them, but are afraid to do so, and have to use like language with the wife of James Mill, when she said of her husband in his later life, “He says things that frighten me.” Our youths remember the grave counsels of their fathers ever appealing to heaven, and the prayers of their mothers committing them with uplifted hands to God. They cannot forget that they used themselves to pray, and found comfort under bereavement when they could thus unbosom themselves, in the belief that there was an eye watching over them and a heart pitying them. They have a solemn memory of the parting with fathers and mothers and sisters, who assured those left behind that they were going to heaven, and wished those they loved to follow them—all of which they are now obliged to regard as a delusion. Some of us have to look back on these days with a sigh. We have recorded instances of such feeling in Jouffroy, when his philosophy deprived him of his religion ; and in Greg, when deism took away the faith of his childhood.

But, as honest men, we must follow the Truth—the difficulty being to know which path she has taken, the darkness being so dense. We cannot return to the simple faith which we have left far behind ; the water cannot return and run up the hill down which it has descended. In the struggle feelings, more bitter than tears, have been wrung from the heart. The cry is for the touch of a vanished hand, which has been cut off and committed to the earth, from which it will never rise again. There is a shriek heard more piercing than that which comes from a house on fire, with inmates locked in ; than that which comes from a ship on fire, or a lunatic asylum in flames. It would reach the ear of God, were there a god with ears to hear, or a heart to feel for it. I have been cursed by a young man, who has fallen into

vice, and who charges me with leading him from the faith in a God and Mediator, in which his mother had reared him, without giving him anything else in its place, and who says he is disposed to believe in a God—which is as certain as that every effect has a cause—but does not now know the way in which to approach him. The voice cries in broken accents, “They have taken away my God, and my faith and my hope, and I know not where to find them!” It is certain that there is no God to answer the complaint, but I have faith in the development which has done so much in the past, and will do more in the future, that it will fill the void it has created. “The children have come to the birth,” and what we need is one to deliver them; and I advertise for such from among our scientific doctors all over the world.

AN EVOLUTIONIST.